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winter, is quite an inland sea, and at times when there is a strong wind the steamer, a stout boat of 250 tons, belonging to the merchants of Irkutsk, which usually makes the passage twice a week in summer, is unable to cross. Indeed the storms on the lake rage so furiously, as to give rise to a Russian saying, that "it is only on the Lake Baikal, in the month of October, that a man learns to pray from the bottom of his heart." At Pasolski is a monastery, established in the seventeenth century, when this was the frontier, and on more than one occasion ambassadors were sent here by the Russians to treat with the neighbouring tribes. The passage of the lake usually occupies nine to ten hours, and on the west side dark cliffs rise from the water's edge and present a very grand appearance. It was only to this lake that the great traveller Atkinson went, though the title of his book on the River Amoor would have led one to suppose otherwise.

Quitting the lake the road for 40 miles follows the course of the River Angara, which finds its way out of the lake through an opening in the mountains, and we arrive at Irkutsk, the capital of Siberia, and a town of great importance. Viewed from the elevated ground where the cemetery lies, the town, covering a very extended area, has quite a gay appearance, as the roofs of the houses are red, while the domes and spires of more than a dozen churches are coloured green or white. The streets are wide, with many good shops, and although the houses are mostly constructed of wood, they contain all the comforts and luxuries of Western civilisation, as many of the residents are here against their own will. Droschkys ply for hire, as in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and, as most erroneous notions appear prevalent in England respecting Siberia, we may add, that ladies may be seen shopping attired in the latest Paris fashions, the most remarkable of which to a person arriving from the East appeared to be *chignons*, and bonnets hardly worthy of the name.

From Irkutsk the thoroughly organised system of posting enables the traveller to reach Russia Proper without further *désagréments* than those incidental to a land journey of four thousand miles.

7.—Earthquake in the Cachar Hills. Extracts from Letters from Captain GODWIN-AUSTEN.

"Camp Apalos, 14 Jan., 1869.

"I MUST now give you a short account of an earthquake we have had here, and such as I do not care ever to experience again. It took place on the afternoon of the 10th. I had been working in the office-tent during the day, and on its getting chilly, about half-past four, I shut up, and went into the sleeping-tent for my choga, before going outside with the telescope, which required cleaning; while stooping to take the choga from the bedding, I heard call out, 'An earthquake! an earthquake!' I left the choga and ran out; I had not then felt it myself, but by the time I had got outside the ropes, there was no mistaking the fact, for the ground was beginning to rise and fall tremendously, and at last became so bad that it was with difficulty I could keep my feet. —'s children were sitting on the ground, all crying, and this, with the shouting of the servants, and the kicking of the ponies, &c., prevented my hearing any particular sound, save the crashing of the large forest trees that are near our camp; these were tossed about in the wildest way, and one very large one close by came down.

"The motion, in addition to the waves that passed by, consisted of a jerking or shaking. Everything upon tables or chairs was thrown off, no two-storied, or even one-storied house of brick could have stood it; here where the houses

are of wood and bamboo—a mere frame—it would require a terrible earthquake indeed to throw them over.

“ After the motion had been going on for about fifty seconds, I went into the office-tent, and got out the chronometer. The intensity of the shock had then passed ; in fact this must have occurred about twenty seconds from the time of the first shock, and this did not last more than ten seconds. After I had got out the chronometer, and had looked at the time, the last waves were passing, very like those of a gentle swell at sea. It was a curious sight from here (camp) to see the way in which the wave passed over the forest-clad mountain side, as if the trees were bowed by the passage of a mighty wind. The direction of the motion was from west to east, and it went rumbling and roaring away in the distance.

	H.	M.	S.
Time of first shock ..	4	35	6
Ditto second	4	47	46
At	4	39	01} were two jumps of the earth, quite
		4	39 20} perpendicular.
At	5	41	40 another slighter shock.

Some fourteen or fifteen happened between this last, and 6 A.M. next morning.

“ On the 11th we had a shock at 7.20 P.M., another at 9.25 P.M., and several during that night.

“ Jan. 12th two ; one at 6.16 A.M., and at 9.48.30 A.M.

“ On the 13th I went up to Mahadeo, a high peak to the south of this, and when observing there with the theodolite, there was a smart shock. It was very curious to see the bubble of the level moving backwards and forwards long after the shock had ceased to be felt by us ;* the tremor of the ground continued a long time : I was taking vertical angles at the time, and had to wait until the earth had composed itself.

“ At 3.30 A.M. of the 14th, we had our second great shock : it was very smart, but not equal to the first, which ushered in these seismic disturbances. I shall be anxious to hear whether these earthquakes have travelled from the westward far, but possibly they may have had their origin in this range. This part of Cachar is an area of great contortion and upheaval, where we may expect a weakness in the earth’s crust, and a renewal of former disturbing action.

“ It was curious to notice how the hoolocks in the forest were frightened : many of the shocks continued after it had become dark ; these animals kept calling out as they do in the day time, which is what I have never known them to do, and I have wandered a good deal in these forests.

“ There were no atmospheric appearances noticeable. On the 10th it had been rather hazy over the distant hills ; after the earthquake it was clearer. I remarked this, as I had got out the telescope to see whether a certain trigonometrical station mark was showing.”

Captain Godwin-Austen, writing on the 1st Feb., says :—

“ The terrible earthquakes, of which I gave you a short account in my last, seem to have ushered in a period of constant disturbance, which is still going on. Not a day has passed without a shock, we have had one whilst at dinner

* A somewhat similar experience happened to myself at the base-line in the Chuck Valley, in Nov., 1853, near Attok. I was observing for comparison of bars, and the levels, fixed on strong granite pillars, were violently agitated by an earthquake. This led me to devise certain precautions in measuring the base, in case earthquakes should occur during the measurement. Fortunately, there was no recurrence of the phenomenon.—A. S. WAUGH.

(7 P.M.) only just now; the earth hardly ever seems firm, a constantly recurring tremor is very perceptible, and very disagreeable. Since my last I have been twice up the Mahadeo Peak to observe with the theodolite, and the instrument was several times thrown out of level, the tremor of the ground, even when not perceptible to the senses, was distinctly shown on the level scale.

"The river Berak flowed backward for an hour, and near Sylhet has been so lessened in depth that boats now navigate with difficulty; the earth opened in many places, swallowing up trees and houses, mud and hot water were thrown out of fissures, large areas have sunk, others been raised. Near Cachar a village has been left on a slope, where a long line of low hills has been formed.

"During the great shock elephants and horses all went over like ninepins, and I find that I and —— were the only two persons in this camp who kept our feet, and we danced a 'balancez' in front of each other, calling out 'What is going to happen?'

"It will be most interesting to find out how the levels of the country have been altered. I feel certain that great changes have taken place in the peaks. I am getting together all the data I can, and expect to have a very interesting account to offer, relative to the area disturbed, and the directions of the waves. We seem to be here in a very unstable part of the earth."

8.—*An Account of the Land in the Vicinity of Cape Horsburgh, Lat. 74° 44' 24", n., Long. 79° w., and of the Island discovered there.* By ED. P. PHILPOTS, M.B., C.M.

(Communicated by ROBERT BROWN, F.R.G.S.)

OUR voyage was partly for whaling and partly for discovery. We sailed from Peterhead, March 31st, 1865, and were whaling in the vicinity of Resolution Island until June 1st. June 14th, we called in at Noursoak for native dogs. June 19th we visited the Duck Islands, lat. 73° 40', where we found a large number of eider ducks and lummes' eggs. Being unable to force a passage west, in this latitude, we ran south, and tried to cross in lat. 66°; failing to do so, we retreated north, and, finally, crossed to the west land of Baffin's Bay, July 30th, in lat. 75°. Having arrived in the "North Water," and not wishing to sail southward along the west coast, as is usual, we resolved to visit some of the inlets of Lancaster Sound, in pursuit of whales. August 10th, we anchored at Navy Board Inlet, here we saw a large whale, not far from the shore, going west at a quick rate, and near the beach the remains of a dépôt of government stores, which had been plundered by the natives; nothing remained but a few tons of coal, and a large number of cask-hoops built up to form a landmark. August 14th, we visited Prince Regent's Inlet, the west coast of which was ice-locked for several miles, and the large amount of ice prevented us from visiting Port Bowen as we intended. August 16th, we sailed north, till we arrived in Lancaster Sound, and then in a north-western direction, till we were off Caswell's Tower. Lancaster Sound west of this was so full of ice-floe, that in many places but a few yards of water intervened between it and the beach. August 14th we retreated east, in search of a suitable harbour near Cape Horsburgh.

We sailed as far north as Cape Parker, lat. 75° 10' N. and sent our boats north and south of it, to discover a harbour. Thirty miles north of it nothing is found but an unbroken coast; south is a deep bay (Hyde Bay), and a cluster of small islands, forming good harbours, but too shoal for anchorage. In a small bight in the land 7 miles w.s.w. of these islands, we thought it advisable